

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 DHA-02 SCA-01 IO-13 L-03

DEAE-00 SNM-02 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 PRS-01 USIE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

INRE-00 AS-01 /078 W

-----084358 250522Z /23

O R 250445Z JUN 77

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8252

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 0964

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS SHUM LA AS UK US

SUBJECT: LAO SECURITY FORCES DETAIN AUSTRALIAN JOURNALIST AND
OTHERS

1. LAO SECURITY FORCES ARRESTED AUSTRALIAN CITIZEN JOHN
EVERINGHAM, CORRESPONDENT FOR "FAR EAST ECONOMIC REVIEW" AND BBC
NIGHT OF THURSDAY, JUNE 23/FRIDAY, JUNE 24,. IT
APPEARS THEY HAVE ALSO ARRESTED A LOCAL EMPLOYEE OF
THE AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY WHO WAS DOING TYPING FOR
EVERINGHAM IN HIS SPARE TIME. IT ALSO APPEARS THEY
HAVE ARRESTED A BRITISH TEACHER, MR. R.F. ORAM AND
HIS THAI WIFE, IN CONNECTION WITH EVERINGHAM'S ARREST.

2. AMERICAN CITIZEN SANDRA COLLINS DELANGE, WHOSE
DUTCH HUSBAND, DANIELD DELANGE, WORKS FOR UNDP,
VIENTIANE, WAS DETAGRED FOR SEVERAL HOURS ON FRIDAY
AFTERNOON, JUNE 24, WHEN SHE WENT TO EVERINGHAM'S
HOUSE TO PICK UP PHOTOGRAPHS HE HAD MADE AT THE INTER-
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NATIONAL SCHOOL WHERE SHE IS A TEACHER. MRS. DELANGE
ARRIVED AT EVERINGHAM'S HOUSE TO FIND LAO SECURITY
PERSONNEL IN POSSESSION OF THE PREMISES. THEY
DETAINED HER AND ORDERED HER NOT TO USE THE TELE-
PHONE. SHE ANSWERED THE TELEPHONE, HOWEVER, WHEN
AUSTRALIAN CONSUL CALLED TO CHECK ON WHEREABOUTS OF
LOCAL EMPLOYEE AND TOLD HIM SHE WAS DETAINED. AUSTRALIAN

CONSUL GOT THE WORD TO US AND UNDP REPRESENTATIVE FRANK HARTVELT. HARTVELT AND DANIEL DELANGE WENT TO EVERINGHAM'S HOUSE IN OFFICIAL CAR FLYING UN FLAG BUT WERE DENIED ADMISSION BY SECURITY PERSONNEL. HARTVELT SUBSEQUENTLY APPEALED TO SOMCHIT PHILATHIVONG, DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND COOPERATION, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, WHO UNDERTOOK INQUIRIES. SUBSEQUENTLY MRS. DELANGE WAS RELEASED AFTER HAVING BEEN DETAINED ABOUT FOUR HOURS. SHE TOLD ME SHE HAD NOT BEEN MISTREATED IN ANY WAY OTHER THAN BEING OBLIGED TO REMAIN FOR SEVERAL HOURS IN EVERINGHAM'S HOUSE. IT APPEARS FROM WHAT WE KNOW NOW THAT HER DETENTION WAS AT THE INITIATIVE OF THE LOW LEVEL LAO SECURITY TYPES GUARDING THE HOUSE AND DID NOT REPRESENT A HIGHER LEVEL DECISION.

3. AUSTRALIAN AMBASSADOR INFORMS ME EVERINGHAM IS CONFINED, PROBABLY IN THAT KHAO POLICE STATION, AND IS BEING CHARGED WITH POSSESSION OF DRUGS AND POSSESSION OF A GUN. WE UNDERSTAND FROM ANOTHER SOURCE THAT LAO SECURITY PERSONNEL RANSACKED EVERINGHAM'S FILES.

4. COMMENT: WE HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT EVERINGHAM WHO HAS SPENT A LONG TIME IN LAOS AND HAS A LAO WIFE, WHO IS NOW IN AUSTRALIA, HAS BEEN RATHER CAREFUL IN HIS REPORTING NOT TO OFFEND THE LPDR BECAUSE HE WANTED CONFIDENTIAL

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TO REMAIN IN LAOS WHERE HE IS THE ONLY PERMANENTLY BASED WESTERN CORRESPONDENT. IT IS NOT YET CLEAR WHETHER SOMETHING WENT WRONG WITH HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LPDR OR WHETHER HE WAS THE VICTIM OF A MALICIOUS DENUNCIATION BY ONE OF HIS LAO NEIGHBORS. CORCORAN

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Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
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